



KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

NEWS RELEASE

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KENTUCKY BOARD OF EDUCATION TO PROVIDE MUCH-NEEDED RECOGNITION

(FRANKFORT, Ky.) – At a special ceremony on August 3, the Kentucky Board of Education will present diplomas to African Americans who were enrolled at the Kentucky School for the Deaf (KSD) in the mid-20th century, but did not receive recognition for graduation.

“Through the research of the Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and KSD staff, we discovered that these students were segregated into the KSD ‘colored division,’” said David Karem, chair of the board. “This division did not have the same standards, expectations and opportunities for these students as compared to their white counterparts. This resulted in these students leaving KSD at extremely young ages or staying through adulthood and then being discharged without a diploma.”

Approximately 75 individuals have been identified to receive diplomas. These individuals were enrolled at KSD between 1930 and 1955, but left the school without receiving official recognition of graduation or completion of courses.

“Although we can’t change history, we hope that this action will bring long-deserved closure for former KSD students,” said Kentucky Education Commissioner Terry Holliday.

The ceremony will be held at 3:30 p.m. ET on Wednesday, August 3, at Grow Hall on KSD’s campus in Danville. Kentucky Board of Education members, Commissioner Holliday, KSD staff, former students and their family members, state agency officials, state legislators, and local officials will attend the ceremony.

(more)

Visit our website at <http://www.education.ky.gov>.

FORMER KSD STUDENTS IDENTIFIED FOR RECOGNITION

| | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Aaron Adams, Jr. | Virginia Evans | Richard David Riley |
| Betty Banks | Elizabeth Caldwell Gardner | Ernest Robinson |
| Richard Bartlett | Oscar Hamilton | Richard Allen Scales |
| James Minos Brandon | Emma Bell Hill Heard | Dorothy Mae Shaw |
| Dorothy Brown | Thomas W. Houser | Holstin Skilman |
| John Henry Brown | Emilene Hunt | Louis Joe Stewart |
| Fred Adolphus Burdette | Margie Johnson Hunt | Mary Magadeline Caldwell |
| Henrietta Duncan Burnette | Walter Johnson, Jr. | Stewart |
| Henry Reid Caldwell | Marilyn B. Allen Jones | Elizabeth Lee Tarrance |
| Margaret Belle Caldwell | Morris Arnett Lewis | Evelina Thomas |
| Martha Caldwell | Peggy A. Dorsey Lucas | Mary Alice Thomas |
| Robert Caldwell | Cecil McElroy | Ruth Tooley |
| Arthur Caudill | Augustine Miller | Roy Trice |
| Ruby Mae Norman Cherry | Nannie May Miller | Margaret Nell Martin Webster |
| Emerson Lee Clay | Pearlene Briscoe Mollett | Georgia Ann Whitt |
| Susie Morton Clay | William Earnest Moorman | Louise Wigfall |
| Waldo Emerson Clay | Arthur William Morton | Robert Lee Wilkerson, Jr. |
| Anna Lou Coleman | James Newman | James Wallace Wilkinson |
| Wonderline Connor | LeRoy Newton | Sarah Allen Caldwell Wilkinson |
| Ruby Marie Cooper | Myrtle Annie O'Neal | Norma Jean Williams |
| George William Cornelious | Bobby Lee Oliver | Richard Williams |
| Clarence Marvin Courtney | Erma Bradley Payton | Fannie Mae Wilson |
| Robert Lee Croom | Irene Elizabeth Perdue | Ada May Florence Woods |
| William Edward Dickinson | Jasper Potter | Beatrice Mollet Woodson |
| James W. Dunson | George Edward Rawlings | Myrtle Young |

The Kentucky Board of Education also seeks information about any other former African-American students who were enrolled at KSD, but left the school without receiving recognition of graduation or completion of courses. Individuals should contact KSD Principal Rodney Buis at (859) 239-7017 or rodney.buis@ksd.kyschools.us.

In 1823, the Kentucky School for the Deaf (KSD) became the first state-supported school of its kind in the nation and the western hemisphere. KSD has a rich history of ensuring that deaf and hard-of-hearing children and youth in Kentucky have educational opportunities to develop their potential to become educated, life-long learners and productive citizens.

The school currently enrolls approximately 140 students, and the Kentucky Board of Education serves as the board of education for both KSD and the Kentucky School for the Blind (KSB) in Louisville.

While research conducted by staff at the Kentucky Department of Education and KSB does not indicate that KSB had a similar practice in place, former KSB students who believe they were denied diplomas on the basis of race should contact KSB Principal John Roberts at (502) 897-1583 or john.roberts@ksb.kyschools.us.

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